

Valencia Declaration 2012

The people present* in Valencia (Spain), on 9th and 10th November, convened by OCDI (Observatory of Crops Declared Illicit) concerned about the process of discussion and possible outcome on the Guiding Principles for Alternative Development, to be approved at the ICAD II (International Conference on Alternative Development), celebrated in Lima on the 15th and 16th of November, have agreed to make the following statement:

Having accessed the draft Ministerial Declaration on Alternative Development we observe a prominence accorded to international drugs conventions and drug control agencies above the struggle against poverty, the Millennium Development Goals and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Human related to illicit crops.

We note that the draft Ministerial Declaration presents generalities, repetitions, inconsistencies and an Andean bias, in contrast to the contributions of the workshop Thailand ICAD 2011, where experts and officials from different geographical areas, as reflected in the document E/cn.7/2012/8 of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, made progress in the debate in a concrete and consistent manner.

After reviewing the draft of the Lima Declaration, we want to emphasize that:

- Alternative Development is raised mainly in a framework of crop reduction, ignoring the broader social, economic and cultural context.
- The definition of the role of the state has its emphasis clearly on control and enforcement. However, we believe that the emphasis should be placed unconditionally on the role of the state as the promoters of human development while safeguarding fundamental rights of communities affected by problems of illicit crops.
- We appreciate that the draft recognizes the fundamental importance of a proper sequencing in implementing alternative development programs, understanding this as recognition that crop reduction is a consequence of development.
- We consider it essential for the state to assume an appropriate role in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, generated in the framework of crop reducing policies, recognizing that often the intervention of bodies and state security forces is inadequate and counterproductive.
- We demand an explicit recognition of the right to the traditional use of plants declared illegal.
- We demand a guarantee of the right to access and use of land by small farmers.
- We recommend that you capitalize the experiences and lessons learned and good practice in the 30 years of Alternative Development. We demand that international cooperation does not condition the participation in development programs to eradication.
- The legitimacy of the state, the efforts of international agencies and organizations that support the environment and rural economies, are violated when eradication programs and alternative development programs are applied simultaneously.
- The draft declaration aims at developing a unique model of agribusiness (which, among other modalities, promotes monocultures) within the framework of the World Trade Organization and free trade agreements, which excludes access to factors of production to ensure sustainability of small scale peasant economies.
- We note with concern that no mention is made to the mitigation and adaptation to climate change, and no due recognition of the importance of territorial ordering processes is included. Alternative Development policies should emphasize the accountability of the State and the private sector for environmental and social issues, and not just blame farmers involved in the cultivation of illicit crops.

*From Latin America, Africa, Asia and Europe, some participants in Thailand ICAD, 2011

